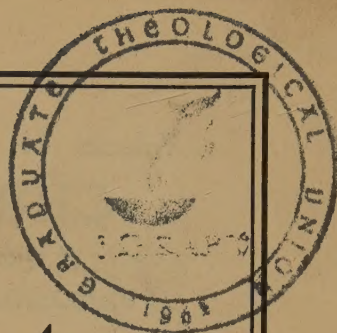


Christianity and Society



Political Thought in Wales

by

Emlyn Davies

Christian Social Thinking in Ireland

by

Tom Finnegan

The Basis of Social Action

by

J. Burnet Easton, Jr.

The Church and Society

by

Chaplain John P. Dillenberger

WINTER 1945

25 CENTS

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Winter 1945

Number 1

CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIETY

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WINTER MEETING

The Winter Meeting of the Fellowship of Socialist Christians will be held on Thursday and Friday, January 3rd and 4th, at Riverside Church, New York City. The meeting will begin at 3:30 on the afternoon of January 3rd, and will end with the evening meeting on January 4th.

The general topic of the meeting is: "WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED FROM THE WAR". Under this general topic the following subjects will be considered: "Economics, Politics, Culture and Religion".

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EDITORIALS

The Atomic Bomb.

There is something both ironic and tragic about the complete impasse which we have reached in regard to the atomic bomb. This was the age, you may remember which was to bring complete security to man, through science's mastery of nature. Instead science produced the atomic bomb and engulfed the nations in an hysteria of fear. We are afraid, and not without reason, that we will stumble into an atomic war and mutual destruction.

This was also an age in which "scientific objectivity" would emancipate men of their prejudices and fears and create a universal community. Instead the universal mind of the scientists produces an instrument of universal destruction, while the mind which must bring the bomb under control is not a universal mind, but an American and a Russian and a British mind. The believers in universal mind attribute this hiatus between the universality of science and the particularity of social intelligence to the "cultural lag" and admonish us daily to match our scientific skill with our social imagination. But something more than cultural lag is responsible for this hiatus. The political mind is not universal, not because the politicians are

not as bright as the scientists, though they are not particularly bright at the moment. The political mind is organically related to the hopes, fears and ambitions of nations. To mitigate the fears of nations and to moderate their ambitions is not so much an intellectual as a spiritual problem. The nations do not know what to do about the bomb because they mistrust each other so deeply.

We tried to evade the whole issue by an obvious pretension. We declared that we would hold the bomb "in trust" and hope the world would trust us as trustees. No nation is good enough to be trustee of such an instrument of destruction; and our pretension that we were good enough produced the cynical reaction which it deserved. Atlee's visit to America got us out of this difficulty. Truman, King and Atlee agreed to place atomic policy in the hands of an international commission, to be appointed by the General Assembly of the United Nations Organization.

This proposal might have worked if it had been made earlier. But by the time it was made the Russians were in such a fever of mistrust that they would be satisfied with nothing less than the transmission of the bomb secret to the

Security Council. Since the Security Council is not organized to keep the peace among its own members, but only to keep the peace in the world, provided that the members of the Security Council are previously in agreement with each other, turning the bomb over to the Security Council is of no help at all in removing mistrust between the great powers. If we had done this immediately we might have allayed Russian mistrust of us; but it would have been politically difficult to share the secret, so long as we mistrusted the Russians as much as we do.

It is on the other hand not clear how we can turn the bomb secret over to the General Assembly without making something quite different of the Assembly than San Francisco intended. Since the Russians have no interest in the Assembly and accepted the idea of it only as a concession to the western world, it is difficult to see how we can build up the Assembly now into a genuine instrument of world order and still retain the cooperation of Russia. The Russians do not like the Assembly because they expect to be outvoted in it. They are not going to go into any organization, not even the Security Council, if they can be outvoted in it. That is why they insisted upon the veto provision. Anthony Eden and others have suggested that we turn the bomb over to the Security Council but abrogate the veto. But this also will be unacceptable to the Russians, unless we miss our guess.

The fact is that the mutual mistrust between Russia and the west is very deep, particularly on the side of Russia though not exclusively on her side. In such a situation the whole issue of the bomb was bound to aggravate the mis-

trust. If we should regard the Russians as wholly unreasonable we need only try to put ourselves in their position and imagine that they had the bomb secret and had announced that they would keep it as a trust. Though the Russians are not wholly unreasonable in their fears, their apprehensions are not completely plausible either. To what degree the Marxist dogma of an irreconcilable conflict between the capitalist and communist world has created these fears and to what degree they have been created by the strategic preparations for another war by our high naval and army command, we do not know. Both factors have probably been operative.

We can find no immediate answer to either the problem of the bomb secret or the Russian problem. Every one seems to have an answer; but granted the depth of the second problem the first seems, for the moment at least, insoluble. Some tentative answer will no doubt be found, for there is obviously not going to be a war between Russia and the west in the immediate future. But there is not yet any evidence that either Russia or the west possesses the resources to overcome the chasm which has opened in the world community. These sorry realities, measured against the hopes for a stable peace which inspired us during the war years, are sad indeed.

The Russian Enigma

The difficulty in solving the problem of the atomic bomb is primarily a difficulty in regard to Russia. The degree of mutual trust between Russia and the west is so minimal that there does not seem to be even that narrow ground of mutual accord which is the presupposi-

on of success in any deal or bargain between either friends or competitors. The Russians do not trust the western world enough to place the bomb secret in the hands on an international organization in which they could be outvoted. We do not trust them enough to put it in the hands of an organization in which they have the veto power. That is the form and substance of the situation.

Our rising difficulties with Russia prompt the question on every side: What shall we think of Russia? Is this totalitarianism just like Nazism? Is Russia bent upon expansion and aggression just as fascism? In answering such questions we must admit that Russian authoritarianism has similarities with any other form of authoritarianism. The lack of freedom in Russia makes it impossible for instance to establish by direct contact with the common people of Russia and to achieve a community of mutual trust between them and us, without which all constitutional provisions for peace are vain. Furthermore the lack of democratic procedures will make the Russian domination of eastern Europe so vexatious that all sorts of unrest must be expected. But this will not lead to democracy; because the more unpopular the Russians make themselves, the less will they be able to allow criticism against their rule to be expressed. Even today there are concentration camps in Poland, used only yesterday by the Germans, and housing today the opponents of the Russian domination of Poland.

This does not mean that Russians are moral cynics as the Nazis were. They do not worship power as self-justifying. They do not believe in the master race. They regard dictatorship as only a pass-

ing phase leading to an ultimately democratic society. But one can not be certain to what degree the provisional cynicism of Marxism has become practically determinative. An unconscious nationalism has insinuated itself into the ostensible universalism of the Marxist creed. Ultimately Marxism is anarchistic and wants to get rid of the use of power in society. Provisionally it is very cynical about the use of power; and it is with that cynicism with which we must now deal. Russian communism is in short a corrupted utopianism. Or rather it is the inevitable consequence of the confusion which utopianism creates when actual political responsibilities are assumed by the prophets of a utopian creed. The immense self-righteousness of Russia which persuades Russians that all opponents of its policies are "fascists" is another natural consequence of utopianism; for Russia must be a pure and virtuous nation by definition, being the only nation on the other side of that 'apocalypse of revolution which is supposed to purge nations of their sins and guilt. We have at least one historical analogy for all this: the relation of Napoleonic power politics to the utopian illusions of eighteenth century liberalism.

If we analyse the attitude of Russia toward the western world and seek to understand the root of her intransigence toward us, the situation is a little more complex. The idea that Russia is as aggressive and imperialistic as the Nazis were must be ruled out. Russia needs peace and the Nazis needed war. Russia has a wide expanse of territory which the Nazis did not have. The Russian dictatorship is, on the whole, cheerfully accepted as the Nazi dictatorship was not. It does not therefore have

to justify itself by political adventure. It could justify itself most successfully by producing more consumers' goods for its masses. This is the more obvious since both Kalinin and Molotov have betrayed a strong Russian inferiority feeling about Russian living standards. In fact the discovery by Russian soldiers of higher living standards in the devastated remnants of western Europe than Russia has ever possessed has so seriously punctured a Russian illusion, that it has become a major problem of morale in the Russian army. The Russians do not really want war as the Nazis did. That is the one remnant of hope which we have in a very insecure world.

The hope is however tenuous because the Russians act as if they did want war. The reason they do so is because they have a fear complex which is almost psychopathic. They do not trust the western world. This mistrust is partly rooted in Marxist dogmatism. Presi-Kalinin is the only Russian statesman who has recently asserted the Marxist dogma of the irreconcilable conflict between the communist and capitalist world in an address meant for world ears. But it is frequently asserted for home consumption. This Marxist idea is therefore one of the fruitful sources of fear in Russia, which might have been, but was not, dispelled by the war-time partnership with capitalist nations.

But this dogmatic root of fear is only one of the causes of Russian apprehension. The other is that we, though not desiring war with Russia, are also afraid of her, as she is of us. Our military strategists, partly driven by this fear and partly intent upon preparing for all eventualities as all strategists do, are undoubtedly making plans for a possible

war with Russia. The interest of the navy in Pacific bases is known by Russia not to be prompted by the fear of Japan. The interest of the army and navy in a Near Eastern pipeline is known by the Russians not to be prompted by the fear of Germany. The victory of conservatives in Hungary recently is rightly or wrongly interpreted by the Russians as due to our support. The recent cabinet crisis in Italy, in which the cabinet, resting upon United Front principles, was overthrown, is also interpreted as due to American pressure. Every move we make in Europe, and every move the Russians make either is, or can be interpreted as being, a part of the strategic struggle between Russia and the west, in which an ultimate conflict is presupposed. Naturally the conflict which is presupposed is made the more inevitable by these strategic maneuvers.

It may be that matters have gone too far to be readily mended. Yet in so grave a situation it would be silly to be governed merely by our own fears and to refrain from every adventure and gesture of trust because it contained some risk of failure. For the alternative of continued mistrust means almost certain conflict between ourselves and Russia. If such a conflict comes it will be more horrible than the past war not only because atomic destruction will make it more terrible but also because it will be a civil war inside of civilization, which will rob us of the moral sense of fighting for a civilization against barbarism. We may be willing to say that our part of civilization is better than the Russian part. We might even say that plausibly or convincingly. But there would be little comfort in the assurance.

The Socialist Movement in Europe

Democratic socialism is triumphing in every part of Europe in which a measure of economic health and social stability allows nations to avoid hysteria and seek for political systems which will give a measure of security within terms which will not destroy freedom. Norway and Sweden are both ruled by socialist governments; and the Labor party of Britain is gradually unfolding its socialist program. The piecemeal approach to socialization of all these democratic socialist parties is well expressed by the Prime Minister of Sweden who recently declared: "We will nationalize every industry if that policy promises greater efficiency; and we will refrain from nationalization in any realm in which private possession promises greater results".

While the war and the general impoverishment of the continent is hastening this development toward socialization it must be admitted that the nations which have been most seriously affected by the war are not going to achieve their goals of democratic justice quite as easily as may be hoped for in Britain and Scandinavia. France has three socialist or quasi-socialist parties; and they control all but eighty votes in her Constituent Assembly. But unfortunately the votes are divided between communist and socialist who do not agree on foreign policy and between socialist and the MRP, the radical Catholic party, which is divided from the socialists on cultural educational and other issues and the sincerity of whose radical convictions has not yet been tested.

In this situation France is still without a firm foundation for a parliamentary democracy and a stable national unity. Many of her small parties have been wiped out and her largest party, the Radical Socialists, has been reduced to insignificance. But there is little gain in all this for now parliamentary stability depends upon three equally strong parties between no two of which there is the basis of a stable accord.

Eastern Europe is for the time being so completely under the control of Russia that its political life is dominated by various kinds of "United Front" organizations in which communists play the dominant role. The socialists are the most powerful group in Italy; but this unhappy nation has not yet secured sufficient freedom from its emancipators to be sure of its political future. Nor is it possible to speculate about the political future of Germany except to record that the behaviour of the Red Army has probably removed the possibility of a communist Germany for a long time to come, at least outside of the Russian zone of Germany. That zone will probably remain Russian for a long time. Indeed it is highly probable that the partition of Germany will become an established fact. Whether the western nations will allow Germany sufficient economic stability to permit any kind of creative political movement gradually to arise is still a question. We are still unable to decide what we really want in Germany. Nor can we agree with our allies. The British have done the best job of reconstruction in their zone but at the expense of keeping many Nazis in power. We have rigorously eliminated Nazis but our zone is in eco-

conomic confusion. And the French zone is subject to vindictive measures not dissimilar from those in the Russian zone.

Germany will be for a long while an economic and political vacuum; and it is idle to speculate what may happen there.

If nations subject to too much interference or social instability fail to develop the kind of democratic socialism which Britain and Scandinavia seem destined to establish, it must be regretfully observed that a rich nation such as ours lags behind in another way. While the nations of Europe move forward we find ourselves in social drifts which threaten to undo even the mild progressivism of the New Deal. President Truman continues to make New Deal speeches; but the congress continues to defeat all of his important proposals. That may not be his fault so much as the lack of a parliamentary system which makes a triumphant party responsible for a legislative program. Only a very strong and shrewd President can manage to work out a consistent policy under the constant threat of a bi-party alliance against his proposals. Mr. Truman is not such a President. It is now fairly apparent that he is a little man, trying his best in a big office; and that best is not quite good enough.

But even if the President were more resourceful he could probably not stem the tide of reaction in this country. To be the wealthiest and most powerful nation on earth makes for complacency and not moral and political adventure. We will probably have to taste some fairly bitter fruits of history before we are ready to concede as a nation that "free enterprise" is not a cure-all for

the ills of society and that it has in fact become a dangerous illusion for modern technical society.

The Epidemic of Strikes

Our nation is engulfed in a wave of strikes which are seriously retarding reconversion. Labor wants, on the whole, a sufficient increase of hourly wages to compensate it for the reduction of the work week from 48 to 40 hours. Since the extra hours were paid for at the rate of time and a half this means about 30 per cent. The Department of Commerce has concluded from its studies that industry would be able to increase wages about 24 per cent without increasing prices, due to the increase in technical efficiency during the war years. Something like a 25 per cent increase is therefore justified, not only as a matter of justice to workers who must subsist in a period of rising prices but also in order to maintain the health of our economy; for it must be remembered that we must raise the consumption power of the nation from a hundred to a hundred and fifty billion per year if we are to absorb the products of our industry. We must do this even if we were able to achieve an export balance of fifteen billion by a wise trade policy. Such a policy would incidentally require greater wisdom than those manifest who would drive Britain into a sterling pool by failure to deal imaginatively with the problem of the British debt.

Why then does industry resist the bid for higher wages so rigorously. The best it offers is a 10 per cent increase, which labor refuses to accept. Part of the answer is that it would have to dip into its reserves to pay the higher wages for some months, that is, until mass pro-

duction gets fully under way. A generous tax policy of recent congresses has led to very large reserves and it is labor's thesis that these reserves should be used. Industry refuses to do so. Also industrialists declare that they will not know whether they can afford a 30 per cent increase until they see how mass production develops. Why does not labor wait a little and make its demands after history had offered irrefutable evidence of their validity? The answer is partly that labor needs the increase now to meet rising costs; and partly that it is afraid of losing its bargaining power when unemployment has surfeited the labor market.

This answer proves how curiously inflationary and deflationary movements chase each other about in our post-war economy. The wage increase is an immediate necessity to meet present inflation and to anticipate ultimate deflation. Undoubtedly labor would settle for a 25 per cent increase. But this will not be granted until after there has been a tremendous tussle between management and labor, with the loss of billions in our annual productivity.

The Nonchalance of Faith

The primary spiritual problem of our day is given by the fact that we must do our duty and seek to establish both justice and peace, with so little hope of any solid success in our lifetime. The world suffers from the vast destruction and dislocations of the most terrible conflict of history; and the chastisement of the war have not moved the nations

sufficiently to repentance to guarantee a new and wider basis of true brotherhood in the community of nations.

In these circumstances we can not be sure that any task fulfilled and any responsibility met, will bring any obvious fruits of peace and justice. We have lived so long in a culture which drew the meaning of our moral responsibilities from the hope of their actual fulfillment in history, that Christians, as well as non-Christians, are poorly prepared for the insecurities of our present existence. "Be not anxious for tomorrow", declared Jesus, "for tomorrow will be anxious for the things of itself; sufficient unto the day are the evils thereof". This warning suggests that our tasks and responsibilities have an intrinsic and absolute validity in God's sight in the present moment without too much regard for their historic fulfillment and justification. The Christian faith never leaves the whole historic pattern out of the meaning of our existence. But it also understands that history is not so simply meaningful as modern culture had assumed. The present moment, without regard for tomorrow, is more meaningful if it is understood in its absolute significance, that is, "in God's sight", than we have understood.

We are living in a period of such great insecurity that we can seek after the fulfillments of tomorrow only if we are not too concerned about them. We will have to learn the sublime nonchalance of faith. Or rather, that nonchalance is a gift of grace to those who truly live by faith.

POLITICAL THOUGHT IN WALES

By EMLYN DAVIES

For many people Wales is a political province of England, and, apart from some local variations, there is little real distinction between the political outlook of the two countries. There is, of course, some measure of justification for this judgment. Wales has not enjoyed political independence since 1282, the date of the Edwardian conquest, and during the past seven and a half centuries no serious attempt has been made, with the single exception of Owen Glyndwr's rebellion, to set up an independent sovereign Welsh state. In political theory, either Home Rule or Dominion Status has been as far as any political party has been prepared to go, and it is, therefore, not surprising that there still persists the common assumption that the politics of Wales merely reflect those of England.

Nevertheless, there is a real and abiding difference between the two political outlooks. This is mainly accounted for by the fact that two *nations* are involved. For centuries the two have lived in close proximity, and, as a result of the economic and military power of the one, in reasonable harmony with each other. Both have benefited and both have suffered from their association with each other, and the partnership (if that is not endowing a political arrangement established and maintained by force with too idealistic a description!) has worked most successfully; but nothing has obliterated the deep division between the two nations. The preservation of the Welsh language (and not merely an accent, as is the case in

Scotland!) as the appropriate medium whereby the nation becomes articulate, is itself a clear indication of the virility of the national consciousness of the Welsh people.

The impetus behind this national vitality was the religious awakening of the nineteenth century, and it is the predominating part played by religion which is the key to the understanding of Welsh political development. As recently as the years of depression from the mid-twenties until the outbreak of the second world war, it was declared that one of the troubles with the Welsh miner and the steel worker (not the imported miner from England or the imported cheap Irish labour) was the fact that he took much too seriously what was preached from his chapel pulpit on Sundays about the sanctity of human life and the equality of men before Almighty God. It was the pulpit and not the platform which moulded the political as well as the religious attitude of the Welsh nation during the exciting nineteenth century days, and this has obtained until very recently.

This has had two significant consequences. Firstly, there is a strain of idealism about Welsh politics which is frequently far detached from the grim realism of political conflict, and secondly, the nation has loomed more largely in the political outlook than the class.

This two-fold feature was clearly demonstrated during the reign of Liberal political thought and authority in

the land—a reign, incidentally, which is by no means over in agricultural Wales. Liberalism was regarded as the political expression of the religious convictions of Nonconformist Wales, and the leaders of religion and politics were governed far more by the concept of nation than by the idea of a class. The political education of Wales was undertaken by a preacher, Hiraethog, who edited the first Liberal newspaper in Welsh, *Yr Amserau*, and results of the 1868 election were a notable indication of the success of the movement so ably and imaginatively conducted by him and Camuel Roberts, of Llanbrynmair. Of the 30 members who sat for Wales, 22 were Liberals. To this Liberal success Wales owes the Sunday Closing Act (1881, the Welsh Secondary School Education Act 1889), and much later, in 1920, after bitter and tragic conflict, the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the State Church in Wales—all three measures displaying an understanding of a political national situation which was distinct from that of England.

But a significant change occurred during the 1906 election. Six Labour representatives were elected at a time when the Liberal tide was in full flood, but their election had more to do with the effect of the Welsh religious revival than is oft-times admitted. As early as 1904, when the religious revival swept the land, Nonconformity began to show signs of withdrawing from political activity and social witness. The stress on individual salvation distracted the attention and diverted the concern of many from social justice and economic righteousness. Temperance and Disestablishment were the only “live” issues, and not even the Balfour Act of 1902 had

created the political stir which was expected in Wales.

Moreover, Liberalism itself became less and less radical in its political outlook, and radical political thinking was undertaken by the rising Labour party. But it was a rising party which was concerned with the establishment of social justice everywhere, and not merely with the building up of a just social life for Wales, and at no time did it succeed in securing the whole-hearted devotion which Nonconformity had given to Liberalism. The distinction is not to be pressed too far, but Liberalism was a political faith, whereas Labour politics represented a political theory, which was neither sustained by a love for Wales nor informed by religious fervour. Not that the early Labour leaders were anti-religious. Keir Hardie’s political testament was the New Testament, and many of the Welsh members served their local church with fidelity and devotion. Several of the older men continue this practice to this day. But the movement as a whole, especially after its close contact with Continental socialism after the 1914–1918 war, has looked with suspicion on organised religion, and in Wales, no less than in England, the withdrawal of the official church from real political activity has deprived both politics and religion of much of their real verve.

Furthermore, the domination of Labour politics by the Trade Unions has retarded rather than promoted the Labour cause in Wales. Their tendency to authoritarianism and to the overriding of personal judgment is not acceptable to a nation in which liberty was once the air they breathed. In Industrial Wales, where much of the Welsh

culture has been destroyed, the Trade Unions can afford to ignore the traditional plea for liberty, because social security is much more substantial, and, after fifteen years of depression, far more desirable. But the cry will be raised again, because it is a part of the religious heritage of the land, and until there is an integration of social security and liberty in one political faith, Wales will remain an uneasy place for any political party. The strain of idealism may make the Welsh an incalculable political element, but it is far more probable that the ascendancy of religion will transform the whole political outlook in one generation.

That this judgment is true to the actualities of the situation is indicated by the growth of the Welsh Nationalist Party in recent years. The true strength and political realism of this party lies in its recognition of Wales as a nation. The presupposition of all its political thinking is that Wales can only enjoy both economic and political justice when she is treated as a distinct and separate nation, and the party has been responsible for much serious thought with a view to creating a Welsh State, enjoying Dominion Status within the British Commonwealth. But the party draws its enthusiasm from the young ministers who have embraced the pacifist and nationalist doctrines with extreme devotion. Once again in the history of Wales, a love for Wales and strong religious convictions are bound together, and although in the recent election six out of the seven candidates forfeited their election deposit, it is significant that the one candidate who did not suffer this misfortune was offering herself for the Welsh University seat.

Perhaps the most unusual feature of the attitude of the Nationalists is the naïve judgments made by their leaders on economic issues. In the early days of the Nationalist movement this was attributed to the dependence of one of the party leaders upon the papal encyclicals and Roman Catholic publications for his economic views and criticisms, but his influence in this sphere is considerably less than it was, and a serious endeavour is now being made to meet this deficiency in the political thinking of the party.

It is obvious that the present political situation in Wales calls for a new *religious* awakening which will be politically realistic and truly national. The party which has the deepest national concern has no serious alternative for socialism to offer the country; the party which is committed to a policy of social amelioration and economic reconstruction thinks so generally that Wales has lost any special significance; the party which once combined these two loyalties has ceased to exist, in spite of the residuum of political thought it has left behind. The political deliverance of Wales must await the reawakening of Nonconformity; but Nonconformity itself will need to be revitalized before it can undertake this responsible task.

This assessment would appear to ignore the existence of the Episcopalian Church and other religious communions, but, in fact, it does not. There was a period in the history of Wales when the light of national culture (in its widest sense) was faithfully guarded by devoted sons of the then established Church, but the present tendency within the Episcopalian Church is more inward than outward. The increasingly power-

l and articulate High Church Party is still smarting under the wound of disestablishment, and dislikes intensely the observient position which in practice is obliged to occupy in Welsh life. Only on State occasions in the principalities does the Episcopalian Church come into its own, but in the political construction of Welsh Wales the key to the situation certainly seems to be in the hands of Nonconformity. For the present, Nonconformity is politically ineffective, chiefly because it is religiously stagnant. If it can discover the way to the springs of renewal, becoming again theologically alive, its social witness may contribute extensively to the solution of the acute political problem of how to secure personal freedom in a planned economy. For the social ar-

rangement which arose out of Welsh Nonconformity when it was theologically alert and socially sensitive was essentially democratic in that it established personal freedom in a social relationship of responsible persons, and insisted that the essence of such responsibility was the provision of social security for all. Only when the divorce between liberty and security was tolerated by Nonconformity (chiefly through its own withdrawal from social witness) did Liberalism find itself like a soul without a body, and until some political party discovers the secret of how to establish these twin pillars of democratic society simultaneously, all political programmes will appear as bodies without souls.

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CHRISTIAN SOCIAL THINKING IN IRELAND

By T. FINNEGAN

Characteristics of Irish Social Thinking

In England the nineteenth century was an age of social reformers. Names readily come to mind: Wilberforce, Shaftesbury, Morris, George Cadbury, Scott Holland. I can think of no comparable names in Ireland of the same period. When this occurred to me, it struck me as a curious fact. Why should it be so? The Englishmen were men of the well-to-do class who heroically and unselfishly championed those less fortunate than themselves. In Ireland the social champions came from among the people: they struggled with the people, leading them, but as one of themselves. Unless the landlord were to take up their cause there was no one else to do it, and the landlord was disqualified from the first, for he was either absentee or else distrusted as a member of an alien race. So it was usually left to the common folk not merely to produce their own leader but also to define the content of the end to which they wished him to lead them. The Irish are a people given to dreaming dreams and seeing visions and so the leader had to be one who could both comprehend the vision of what should be and lead them to its fulfilment.

"And the wise have pitied the fool that
hath striven to give a life
In the world of time and space, among the
bulks of actual things,
To a dream that was dreamed in the heart,
and that only the heart could hold."

Whatever the "wise" may think this striving to give a life to the dream in the world of time and space is characteristically Irish and so it has been throughout Irish history. Padraic Pearse, the author of these lines and one of the leaders of the Irish rebellion of 1916, whatever view we may take of his aims and political methods, was true to this Irish tradition. Social thinking and political action have in Ireland a long history of close association, the one deeply influencing the other. As political action has largely been taken inside the confines of an avowedly Christian environment, social thinking has not been divorced from Christian thinking; certainly any thinking which has been done in opposition to the main stream of Christian influence has been short-lived and in the end has been absorbed and assimilated by its Christian environment. As with everything in Ireland, there is history behind this. In the long course of national struggle, the Church and particularly the Roman Catholic Church, has never lost touch with the struggle of the common people for better social conditions. This is due to the fact that bad social conditions were thought of, sometimes wrongly but often rightly, as due to alien domination and therefore a struggle against the one was at one and the same time a struggle against the other. And the Roman

Catholic Church, which recognised the national struggle as one not merely against an alien race but as well against the representatives of an alien religion, was usually on the side of the common people.

In the Protestant north too one finds a traditional association between Church and people in the struggle for better social conditions. The Presbyterians especially have in the past fought hard on the side of social progress and in the days of the French revolution there was no town throughout Europe which rejoiced more over the success of that revolution than Belfast, where there were at that time strong republican sentiments and the tradition then formed of the Presbyterian ministers taking an active part in political struggle still lingers and on occasion suddenly manifests itself. One of the most interesting examples is the struggle for Tenant-Right, as it was called, in Ulster in the middle of last century. Many Presbyterian ministers championed the farmer against the landlord and the matter went so far that the General Assembly in July 1850 passed a resolution to petition Parliament in favour of Tenant-Right. This was not done without opposition, and the formidable Rev. Dr. Cooke protested against the younger men preaching "rank communism", but the younger men were not daunted and they claimed rightly that the Land Question was closely connected with the moral and religious condition of the people. But, said Dr. Cooke, some of the ministers had been "guilty of communism", by "attacks on the nobility and aristocracy of the land, thus violating the word of God which says "Thou shalt not speak

evil of the ruler of thy people!"¹ Much more typical than Dr. Cooke's reactionary words of the attitude of the Presbyterian minister to the irresponsibilities of landlords are the words of a leading young minister in 1850 addressing tenant farmers: "Remember that united you stand, disunited you fall. It has been the practice of the enemy to divide and conquer. They know that if they can divide the Protestant against the Catholic they can rackrent you for the next half century. Let us learn wisdom from the history of the past; let Irishmen consider they are all brethren, let each grasp the hand of a brother and agree to differ until they have emancipated the land from rackrenting and feudal absolutism; and then, when they have accomplished this noble achievement, when Irishmen shall have obtained a right to live as freemen in the land of their birth, they shall be friends the remainder of their lives".² These were not mere words, for the tenants won their case after struggling for a quarter of a century.

The Churches in Ireland, then, Catholic and Protestant, have on the whole an honourable history of effective interference in social and political issues. Whether their thinking on these issues has been radical is another matter.

Socialist Struggle in Ireland

A further factor to be kept in mind in assessing the present position of social

¹ For an account of the struggle see Woodburn, *The Ulster Scot*, p. 360. It is interesting that in 1850, two years after the *Communist Manifesto*, the younger ministers could be, even if falsely, dubbed "communist"; it shows how alive they must have been to current social thinking, if the word was used in more than a general sense. The word "socialist" was also used in the same debate.

² The Rev. William Dobbin, quoted in Memoir by Rev. W. Moore.

thinking in Ireland is this: Ireland is the only country in Western Europe which in the 20th Century attempted a socialist revolution before the Russian revolution of 1917. Indeed the Easter Rising of 1916 was recognised by Lenin as a forerunner of the more famous coup in Russia. It was inspired largely by the working class of Dublin, led by James Connolly, a worker and trade union organiser, deeply influenced by Marx. But even in the case of the 1916 Rising the Church was not repudiated in any way, and the alliance between Padraic Pearse, a fervent Catholic, and Connolly indicates how far removed the revolutionary movement was from being anti-Christian. It is true that now the memory of James Connolly is regarded by Roman Catholic Church leaders as a somewhat dangerous force, but his example and inspiration have still a vital influence on the working class, both Catholic and Protestant. Ireland, it must obviously be admitted, did not effectively achieve a socialist revolution. The years of rebellion and after resulted in the withdrawal of the British, but that was only half the aim of the 1916 leaders. The net results were a civil war and partition of the country, the South relieved of British Domination, while the North became, much to the chagrin of the Irish leaders, a bridge-head for continued British influence.

These are not unimportant details for they helped to determine the present comparatively unprogressive position of social thinking and action in Northern Ireland and in Eire.

When I agreed to write this article I naturally hoped to make the admirable article by the Rev. Frank Rae (in the Autumn 1944 issue) on *Christian Social*

Thinking in Scotland a model for my own. But as I reflected on the subject I realised that the differences between Scotland and Ireland were so profound that a completely different treatment was necessary. It was possible to treat of Scotland as a denominational and political unit, but only if I confined myself to treating of Eire could I find a political and denominational unit (and even then not quite), while if I confined myself to Northern Ireland I might be said to be dealing with a political unit but hardly a denominational one. So the matter is complicated and I shall try to unravel it by treating separately of Northern Ireland and of Eire.

Eire

Take the position in Eire first. The vast majority of the population is Roman Catholic. In the war they are neutral, though many of them are serving in the British forces and the feeling of sympathy with Great Britain is strong and has increased owing to the scrupulous respect for neutrality shown by the British Government. Neutrality with its consequent shortage of food and other supplies might have provided an excellent opportunity for carrying through a far-reaching scheme, if not of socialism, at least of better distribution of the available resources. But fear of involvement in the war put a damper on any schemes which seemed to be revolutionary (and therefore threatening the existing Government which was pledged to neutrality) and Christian revolutionary social thinking, if any existed, had no chance to bear fruit. Certainly none of the churches seem to have recognised the opportunity, and the parties of the left did not show

any signs of achieving the necessary power. Even the bad conditions due to unemployment caused by the lack of raw materials did not induce any radical plans for its alleviation, and Christians confined themselves to supporting palliative schemes such as clubs for unemployed, feeding of needy children and so on. The Catholic attitude to property and social change is referred to in the editorial comments in the Autumn 1944 issue and need not be reviewed again here. It is quite clear that the Roman Catholic Church has made up its mind about social change and will resist any radical alteration in the ideas of property and, further, it is most active in propagating its conclusions. Its thinking on social matters is continuous and energetic and, I think, honest, and in St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, where the Irish priests are trained, there are no less than two Professors whose subjects touch social questions, one the Professor of Politics and Ethics and the other the Professor of Catholic Sociology and Catholic Action. So the young priests are carefully trained in these matters and after ordination have ample opportunities of instructing their flock in the principles of Catholic sociology, and they keep a vigilant eye on new movements. How far there is a break-away on the part of your Catholics from Church teaching on social matters is exceedingly difficult to estimate, but one cannot think that the increasing industrialisation of Eire, which has been one of the deliberate results of Mr. de Valera's domestic policy, will allow for long anything but radical thinking and action in the sphere of power relations between employers and workers.

But Eire is still largely rural, and a vigorous and notable attempt is being

made, with Catholic inspiration though not exclusively so, to reconstruct rural life without being in any way radical (indeed it follows methods which are traditionally Irish). It is, I believe, one of the hopeful movements. Initiated by Father Hayes, a Roman Catholic priest, it was named *Muintir na Tire*, which means "Men of the Land", and is an attempt to bring to rural life a spirit of co-operation and community and to provide in the country a life for the young which will prevent them from migrating to the towns in a search for seemingly interesting work and leisure. In Father Hayes' words its object is "to teach our citizens the spirit of citizenship and to bring to all the Christian and civic virtues without which freedom would be in vain and a mechanical and political free state would be only a name", and further "the parish is an ideal unit. It has associations religious, social and economic. Christian charity and civic virtues must first be practised in our immediate surroundings if they are to be the directive power of the nation". *Muintir na Tire* is avowedly non-political and not concerned, as such, with methods of Government. It aims at building up "under any form of Government an Irish nation imbued with Christian and civic virtues". The basis of the organisation is the parish, and it is to be remembered that the Irish parish, unlike the English, is still a community, centered round the village "chapel". *Muintir na Tire* forms a parish guild composed of Sections representing the different interests in the parish, e.g., Farmers, Labour, Business and Professional,³ and from the Guild

³ This idea of vocational representation is prevalent in Ireland today, e.g., the Eire Senate is elected on this basis. It should be carefully watched,

a Parish Council is formed which is responsible for the general social welfare of the parish. The organisation has a democratic atmosphere and many excellent schemes have been carried through including the establishment of co-operative groups.

There is an obvious danger in a non-political organisation of this kind that it may be used by a particular political group, or that it may be merely a movement acquiescent in and confirming the status quo, but it has undoubtedly brought new heart into some parishes and if it remains democratically controlled it may become the inspiration of something more radical and give the people much needed practice in managing their own affairs on a co-operative basis.

Frequent testimony has been given by members of the small Protestant minority in Eire that they have been allowed to carry on their lives without any religious interference on the part of the Roman Catholic majority. This group, living chiefly in Dublin, though scattered too in small numbers over the rest of Eire, is the last remnant of the old Anglo-Irish ascendancy. They are people who had been accustomed to power and influence in the days of the Union, and it was clear that with the establishment of the Irish Free State their position of prestige and privilege must disappear, but those who decided to stay in Ireland honourably accepted the position and proved themselves valuable citizens in the new state. Many of them are progressive in their social thinking, but have little power as a group and so they have co-operated in any schemes of social service in which it is possible for Catholic and Protestant to work together. For example, some Protestant clergy

have co-operated in *Muintir na Tire* and in the city of Dublin many schemes of social amelioration have Protestant leadership. Though their numbers are diminishing, and, being mainly bourgeois, they have little contact with the working class which is almost entirely Roman Catholic, they are making a contribution in social matters out of proportion to their numerical strength.

Northern Ireland

When we come to Northern Ireland we find a more complicated situation. In Eire there is a homogenous population in which there is a large body of common loyalties such as is essential for the functioning of a democratic state. In Northern Ireland there is no such homogeneity. Two-thirds of the population of this semi-independent province is of Protestant settler stock, and though now emphatically hibernicised have closer spiritual (or is it economic?) kinship with England than with their fellows across the border in the South. This two-thirds of the more than a million inhabitants of the province is mainly centered in industrial Belfast, which a little over a hundred years ago was scarcely more than a village, while the one-third Catholic population is divided between Belfast and the rest of the province. The result is that in Belfast the Protestants can by weight of numbers easily rule the roost, but in the province at large there are many districts where the Catholics are in the majority and sometimes even are allowed political power.⁴ Add to this the

⁴ But not always, e.g., in the City of Londonderry where though the Catholics now outnumber the Protestants the city wards are so arranged that so far the Catholics have not been able to secure more than 8 out of the 20 seats in the City Council. A class issue is involved here too. It is a grievance much aired by the Catholics.

fact that most of the large industrial undertakings are in the hands of Protestants and that there are comparatively few Catholic owners of industry, the majority of the Catholics being of the working class or black-coated, and we see that the line of religious cleavage coincides with the line of class cleavage (in Belfast, however, the lines would diverge somewhat). This has an important bearing on the social-political situation, for it means that the bitterness of religious conflict are often intensified by class conflict. Further, the Catholic one-third minority has since 1921 entertained a grievance, sometimes naturally exaggerated in its expression, against the Northern Government on the grounds of religious discrimination; it has never become reconciled to the partition of Ireland and to separation from its co-religionists in the south, and it may therefore easily be rallied by political leaders to the cry of political union of north and south. So we find a continually dissident minority which, unlike the Protestant minority in Eire, has never wholeheartedly co-operated in either the social or political activities of the province. They suffer from a persistent feeling of political and social inferiority, which causes a constant threat of conflict which may come to the surface at any moment. The Protestants, on the other hand, while in power in the north are actually a minority in Ireland taken as a whole, and it is almost impossible to exaggerate the deep seated fear which they have that union with the south will mean Catholic domination. So we have fear on the one side and brooding suspicion and a sense of inferiority on the other, and those who wish to see radical social progress have to face and overcome these formidable demons. The Protestant political leaders see or prefer

to see in any left movement a threat to the constitutional position of Ulster by splitting the vote, while the Catholic leaders see in it a weakening of their protest against partition. The issue of partition can be used at any time by either side to crush at birth any unwanted movement. In this at least both sides co-operate. This issue is like a dead hand on the province and has caused political frustration. The position has been unscrupulously exploited by both parties with the result that the working class movement, which must of necessity contain both Catholic and Protestant workers, has been hardly more than a reformist group incapable of securing political power. And so the more progressive Christians, while they heartily dislike the tub-thumping of their fire-eating Orange brethren, have found no effective outlet for their own political ideas and indeed rarely express them in public. Along this path, of course, lie frustration and stagnation. And yet, I should not find it hard to believe that, were this fantastic issue of partition cleared away (as I believe it could be by honest and courageous thought and action and speech, difficult and perilous though it might be) a considerable number of the younger and even older ministers (particularly Presbyterian) would take a leftward turn in politics. Many of them, perhaps the majority, come from homes where money has not been over plentiful, and indeed many, before their student days could begin, had to earn a living either on the farm or in the office or workshop. So they start with the inestimable advantage of first hand knowledge of how the unprivileged live and, provided they do not forget the rock whence they were hewn (as, alas, they often do in the glamour of their new-found privilege),

there is good material here for giving the Church, and through the Church, the people a lead in the direction of Christian social advance. The Churches in Northern Ireland have not yet lost the masses, though there has been a drift away, but they have not been conscious enough, or if conscious, not outspoken enough about how the masses live. Their contact with the working class has been too often through "missions", though some remarkable work of this kind has been done and some vast ameliorative schemes in connection with "mission churches" have been carried through, but little or no confidence has been given to the workers that they could themselves take political action to remedy social evils, perhaps because the Churches are afraid of losing them to a political party over which they might have no such influence as they have through the Orange order or the Unionist party. During the period of air-raids in 1941 many of the clergy showed how deep and sympathetic working class contacts they had (though some showed lamentable weakness here) and the Christian conscience of Belfast was at that time rudely awakened by the revelation, manifest to all but the blindest, of the conditions in which large numbers of the workers were normally condemned to live. At the meeting of the General Assembly following there were some indignant outbursts but nothing of any consequence has followed. The memory of those who do not themselves have daily contact with such conditions of life is lamentably short. The workers, too, on their side have little reason to associate the Church with any efforts at radical social reform, though the Report of the General Assembly Committee on *the Interpretation of the*

Church's Task in the Present Crisis presented in 1944 attempted to define the Christian attitude to the "Russian experiment" (sic) and considerable publicity was given to their not ungenerous estimate of those aspects of it which might appeal to the Christian and some of the speeches on it in the Assembly displayed a strong leftward tendency.

The Future

If I read the signs of the times correctly, Christians in Northern Ireland may soon have no choice but to face the social issue. The post-war period with its immense problems of employment may soon be upon us. Indeed it has already begun. As I write I hear of an open-air demonstration in Belfast of 25,000 workers who are threatened with unemployment owing to the closing of certain war factories. If this happens now before the war is over, what may not happen when more thousands must even temporarily be paid off? The workers themselves may force the issue and if the Churches maintain any live contacts with them, as it is to be hoped they will, they may be obliged in the near future to make a decision for the workers or against them, and to formulate some radical Christian social policy. The Presbyterian Church at least has abundant man-power at its disposal, for the number of candidates for the ministry exceeds the demand, if that demand is limited to the conventional requirements. Many licentiates find it impossible to get a church or even an assistantship, though there are many congregations which are in dire need of man-power. In that respect the Episcopal Church of Ireland has shown itself much more elastic. But these young

men will need a more systematic training for these new tasks than they would get by casual experience, and something in the nature of Dr. George MacLeod's Iona community is needed here. So far however I have discovered few signs of an original and new approach to these problems and the training of theological students continues to follow the traditional academic curriculum.

Conclusion

The Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, as elsewhere, will continue to formulate its social teaching and following its usual practice will impose the results of its social thinking on its faithful flock, and unless in the storm and stress of post-war social upheaval there is a revolt

from that teaching (as may well happen), it will continue to refuse any fundamental change in social relationships. The Protestant Churches, by the very fact that even if they did make radical pronouncements on social issues, cannot impose the conclusions even on the faithful, and therefore they must work by the surer and slower and ultimately more effective method of the leaven. But this way can have tremendous power and may create a movement of the spirit which could change the face of Ulster, even of Ireland. I am not hopeless of that. But I have a fear that, due to their persistent pre-occupation with secondary social issues, they are too late in setting about the task and may miss the flood-tide.

THE BASIS OF SOCIAL ACTION

By W. BURNET EASTON, JR.

One of the brighter stars in the crown of Protestantism has been its emphasis upon what is now called "The Social Gospel" or "Social Action." There is not space here to trace the development of this movement from the days of its pioneers, men like Shaftesbury and Wilberforce, down to the present day. It is perhaps enough to notice the differences in social legislation and in concern for the rights of the individual common man one finds in the Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian countries where Protestantism has been strong with the situation in the Latin countries where Protestantism has been weak and persecuted. In the past fifty years or so there has been an increasing emphasis in Protestantism on the Social Gospel, and this constant emphasis upon the duty of Christians to live the law of love in social terms has done far more than many people realize to create the relatively high social conscience that exists in this country. To claim this is by no means to claim anything like perfection. We have been unable to eliminate war; we still have slums and economic insecurity; and the race discrimination in America, North as well as South, is a far cry from being Christian. Yet some things have been done, not the least of which is the feeling that the individual *ought* to have the benefit of the Four Freedoms; and what has been done has been accomplished to a large degree by the quickened Christian conscience of Protestantism.

The primary motive for this Christian social conscience has been derived from variations of the general theme: "Building the Kingdom of God on Earth." Under this high hope men and women have gone out to the foreign mission field, into the slums, into labor, and into industry and government. It is almost impossible for Protestant bodies to meet without passing resolutions condemning one social injustice or another, and advocating some scheme of social reconstruction. It is true that many of these resolutions never get beyond the minutes of the recording secretary, but the cumulative effect has had a real influence on the cultural conscience of the country.

No Christian in his right mind would want to minimize the value or importance of this social emphasis, nor would he wish to undercut it. Yet there are many people in our churches who feel that the Christian Faith, as advocated by those who urge a return to orthodoxy, leads to an other-worldliness which will "cut the nerve of social action." The basic presupposition of these critics of the return to the classical Christian theology is that the incentive to moral and social action is dependent upon the ultimate success of some ideal, such as world peace, social justice, or social brotherhood. The argument of their criticism seems somewhat as follows: "If you say that the Kingdom of God (or perfect peace, or justice) can never be realized on earth, that man will always be too sinful and selfish to create it and that

it can only come at the end of history as the gift of God, then why try to do anything? We do not ask or expect the Kingdom to be built in our lifetime; it will take years, centuries; but if we are not contributing to its eventual realization, then why try to work and sacrifice for something that will never happen? Why not just sit back, practice an escapist mysticism, and let God do the rest? You are robbing us of the motive which has done tremendous good in the world and has enlisted the support of our most idealistic people." Such in general is the argument of a large, fine, and earnest group of "social gospel-ers." The criticism is made in bewilderment and sincerity, and it must be sincerely answered.

First of all, hard though it may be to accept, if there be, as Christianity maintains, a God Who reveals Himself in Jesus Christ for our salvation, and if that revelation leads irrevocably to an otherworldly mysticism, then that is what it leads to and we must conform. It cannot be said too often that the Christian Faith is not something we make up to suit ourselves; it is something that is given by God Almighty through Jesus Christ. It is something which we either accept, regardless of what it does to our own personal desires, or which we reject. If we accept it and sincerely try to live it, we have the right to call ourselves Christians even though we fall short of the mark (as we shall); if we reject it and are honest, we should not call ourselves Christians. Furthermore, whether we like it or whether we do not, the whole testimony of classical Christianity and of the New Testament is that the Kingdom of God is not something that we shall ever build here on earth and that it is always the gift of God to be

given by Him in His infinite wisdom. *But this does not cut the nerve of social action.* It is only a misunderstanding that fears that it does so. Properly understood, the Christian Faith will always lead men to give themselves for the welfare of their fellowmen. This statement needs a brief elaboration.

A very real, but ultimately a minor, point is that although we never can have a perfect society or the Kingdom of God on earth, there are very genuine differences among possible states of society here on earth. Saint Augustine rightly pointed out over 1500 years ago that the Christian is really a citizen of two worlds at once. During his earthly life, he is a citizen of a temporal society (the City of the Earth) and at the same time of an eternal or heavenly society (the City of God). Compared to his loyalty to the City of God, his loyalty to the City of the Earth is inconsequential. As long as he remains in this life, however, he has very real responsibilities for making the City of the Earth as tolerable as possible; and much can be done.

To illustrate in modern terms: to a man in an airplane some 30,000 feet up in the sky, the difference between living on a hill or in a valley, if they are noticeable at all, are inconsequential. But to the people living on that hill and in that valley the differences may be very real. By no stretch of the imagination can we believe that the hilltop can ever be built up to the airplane (it will only reach the airplane when the pilot brings the latter to earth), but it is easy enough to recognize that there are genuine, although temporal benefits, in getting as many people as possible out of the valley onto the hill. Thus, one need not necessarily believe in the Kingdom of God

as a historical possibility in order to believe that it is far better, and worth working for, to live in a state of relative justice rather than in one of injustice. This, however, is not a particularly Christian position nor a particularly Christian motivation; any ethically conscious person could accept it.

What then *is* the Christian motivation for social action? To answer this question we must go back again to the major Christian premise: the fact of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. This means that the most important task that you and I have is to make ourselves acceptable unto God. We make ourselves acceptable unto God by trying to do His will as revealed to us in Jesus Christ—by trying to apply the law of love in every area of life. But the motive, be it noted, is not that the areas of life will gradually become better (even though, temporarily, they do): such results we must ascribe merely to good fortune. Rather the motive is to fulfill the demands of God.

This view puts the whole Christian motive for social action on a different but much firmer basis. Those who say that we must have the hope of building the Kingdom before we can go out and build it, unconsciously (but none the less really), put the motive on a pagan basis. Perhaps at no other point have the acids of modern secularism so subtly seeped into Christian thought. Actually this attitude means that we do not trust God completely and that we must have success in worldly terms; actually this attitude says: "I must have the satisfaction of success before I shall help." At its deepest level, this is an attitude of selfishness and pride; we want our share of the credit in something other men can

see and praise us for, even though we pretend we do not want the praise. The real test of faith and trust in God comes not when we work hard to accomplish some good and see it gradually succeed, but when we work hard and see no earthly hope of its success, and still work. As William A. Spurrier expressed it in *Christus Victor Newsletter*:

One works for social equality, justice, order and brotherhood only because these are expressions of his love for God and his consequent love for men. Given this love, what difference does it make if someone tells us that perfect brotherhood is not possible in history? Why should that negate man's love for man and for God? If such knowledge does rob man of his love, it only proves that his love for God was not real. It proves that his love was essentially a love for himself and for the significance of his works.

The idea that we must feel that we are actually building the Kingdom, or that we must have some worldly success before we can work for it, is a less than Christian idea.

Contrary to this idea, and to its corollary, so popular today, that the way of love will pay dividends here and now in returned attitudes of love,¹ Jesus makes it abundantly clear that we cannot expect any social reward. In his oft quoted parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), his greatest illustration of love in action toward a member of another race, there is not the slightest suggestion that the Good Samaritan expected or received any benefit for his

¹ It is true that an attitude of love may and sometimes does have a reconciling effect. More frequently love's opposites, hate and distrust, produce a response of hate and distrust. Certainly love is much more likely than hate to pay dividends in reconciliation and harmony. Love, however, by no means always pays such dividends. Jesus' love while on the cross reconciled none of his tormenters. An attitude of love on the part of a Jew standing before a Gestapo tribunal would have little effect on his judges.

agnanimity. It is not even suggested at the victim of the thieves thanked him. All that he received for his efforts was risk, trouble, inconvenience, and expense. Again in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus makes it abundantly clear that the only reason for forgiving, going the second mile, loving our enemies and so forth is that this kind of disinterested love is required by God of His children: "But I say unto you, love your enemies . . . and pray for them that persecute you" (Matthew 5:44). Why? Not because it will make our enemies nicer to us or because it will create a happier social state, but "that ye may be sons of your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 5:45). We are to forgive men their trespasses against us, not on any pragmatic or utilitarian grounds, but because we are all sinners; and then "your heavenly Father will also forgive you" (Matthew 6:14). Indeed, Our Lord brings the Beatitudes to a climax by saying that we are to count ourselves blessed when "men shall reproach you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake" (Matthew 5:11). The supreme example of this again Jesus, putting His teaching to the acid test in going to the Crucifixion. Our Lord trudged His weary way on the road to Golgotha and a criminal's death, He was, from any human standpoint of success, a failure. Alone and forsaken by even His most trusted disciples, everything He had tried to do seemed doomed to futility. And indeed, *manly speaking*, it was doomed to futility. Jesus was a realist; He had known what was coming and had predicted His death. But Jesus had a sublime faith in God and a sublime conviction that although He might be defeated utterly His only responsibility

was to obey God and God would take care of the rest.² And God did take care of the rest in the Resurrection, but that was not a *human* undertaking. Jesus, then, both in His teaching and in His action, put the sole emphasis for Christian social action upon obedience to God.

This is the true Christian basis for all ethical action. We work for social and economic justice, for social brotherhood and a warless world, in a word, for the Kingdom, not because we expect ever to realize these states here on earth, but because working for them to the limit of our ability and energy is the only way we can fulfill the demands of God upon us as revealed by Christ. "If a man say, I love God and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (I John 4:20). This puts the whole motive for social action on a far firmer basis. Now we need not worry about the results of our efforts. To be free from worry is one of the first steps toward free and creative living. Though we see worldly failure staring us in the face, we have no cause to give up or become cynical. We know that God does not ask us to be worldly successes but only to be obedient, unto death if necessary, and to trust Him for the results. What firmer basis for social action could there be than the knowledge that even though we fail, we are at the same time guarded, justified, and made victorious on a higher level by the Creator of all there is?

² The people who talk about following Jesus' teachings in the realm of ethics without accepting His faith in God are talking the impossible. Jesus could only teach and live as He did because of His absolute trust that God is the kind of a God Jesus revealed. To remove the personal God from Jesus' ethics is to make them meaningless.

THE CHURCH AND SOCIETY

By CHAPLAIN JOHN P. DILLENBERGER

The responsibilities of the church in the world in which we are to live upon return to civilian life is the problem that confronts us. As such, it will have its own particular problems, since every age has its own unique promises and difficulties. However, before we can enter into a discussion of the place of the church in the immediate years ahead, it is essential to examine the theological foundation of the ethical dimensions upon which our Protestant concern for the affairs of the world is based, so that we can avoid either the variety of interpretations or the common platitudes we can all accept.

That does not mean that we can escape either the differences in tradition and interpretation which are a part of our Protestant heritage or that we can ignore the sociological question. One would be as futile as the other. But it does mean that behind these differences a basis must be found which is determining for our orientation to the sociological questions. There are, in other words, premises from which we start. Unless that is clear from the outset, we shall only confuse an already difficult picture.

For the purpose of consideration, then, certain very definite statements will be made—first, concerning what the Christian faith, from its Biblical perspective, has to say about the world; second, what the Christian faith has said historically about our relation to the world; third, what, on the basis of these two factors, the Christian faith has to

say about the world in which you and I live.

There is, perhaps, no better proof of the concern of our faith in the historic character of our world than that Christ Himself entered history. This is the stupendous claim of our faith, that God became man, that he entered our world. By this act, certain very definite things not only can, but must be said.

The world in which we live is a fallen world. By this, we need not claim any point in history in which it fell, nor need we claim any state of perfection in history before the fall. We affirm, rather, the goodness of Creation, and, at the same time, the marring of creation by the activity of man. In short, man has set himself in opposition to God, and, by that very fact, in opposition to himself. He has made himself the center of existence. Now the dictum that man has made himself the center of existence and meaning, which in its deepest dimension is probably the meaning of the Fall, raises the always-debatable question of the total depravity of man. This is hardly an irrelevant question in dealing with the activity of man. The fact of the matter is that man, though he is set against God, is concerned about others in various degrees even on the level of paganism. The doctrine of the total depravity of man, when applied to this aspect of his life, is certainly erroneous; though when applied to the fact that man cannot escape from his self-centeredness with the best of effort into a vital relationship with God, it is cer-

ainly correct. There is no way for man and of himself to turn to God and unto others. The claim, in short, is that the world is compounded of good and evil but that there is no way out of the evil precisely because man is estranged from God and his fellow men.

God in Christ entered history to break into the heart of man and to turn him unto God and unto others. In this supreme act of forgiveness, God at once restores us to Himself and demands obedience of us. The love of God, expressed in His forgiveness, is, then, what gives foundation and possibility to the commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and thy neighbor as thyself". The ethic with which we are concerned may be one of love, but its foundation is in the love of God, which demands an abedience of us that is concerned about others—whether we like it or not.

Through what God has done, He has bound us anew to Himself and others. In this sense, the very foundation of ethics is defined as the relation between God and man in which obedience to God is the very cornerstone of all decision. It is such responsible decision that automatically turns us to others, as every page of the Old and New Testaments affirms.

We have already affirmed that even the natural man is concerned about others. We shall even admit that many a pagan has more concern for his neighbor than has many a supposed Christian, though that is hardly an excuse for not being concerned within the Christian framework with the Christian character of decision. Such matters we shall leave to God's providence. We are declaring,

however, that for us, our life has been shattered from self to God and to others. We are, therefore, in the relationship in which things are demanded of us and in which things are radically changed.

But we shall not deceive ourselves about the character of that change. We are not angels, and the battle is not won. Even the saints—and we would not claim sainthood—are still sinners, though the direction of their life has been radically changed. We shall take seriously the Biblical affirmation of the second coming of Christ with its implication that until such time we shall be living and battling in a sinful world which only in the fullness of time through the instrumentality of God will enter into the Kingdom of God. In this sense, the advent of the Kingdom is considered to be cataclysmic.

We are, then, new beings in Christ, who have been forgiven by him and who try to do his will. But in trying to do his will, by rendering responsible decisions, we shall not establish his Kingdom. We know that the victory over the world has been fully won in Christ; but for us in history, that victory is only in faith which forgives us because our obedience is not full obedience. Although we live a new life in hope and in fact, it is not a perfect life but one in which the struggle continues. The forgiveness of God and the obedience which he demands continue together in every moment of life.

Now that we have set for ourselves the preceding premises about the world, the obvious question is how we are to be obedient in society, which for our purposes is primarily the political problem. Although we have declared the concept

of obedience to God as the foundation of ethics, that obedience must obviously have content.

We naturally should turn to the Bible for that content. But the surprising thing is that the Bible has little to say concerning the political question. Our Lord certainly does not give us a political credo when he declares that we are to give unto Caesar that which belongs to Caesar and unto God that which belongs to God. Nor does St. Paul solve the problem too satisfactorily when he declares that we are to obey the powers that be, since they are ordained of God. The order of government may be ordained of God, but the consequence of obedience to a particular government can be most disastrous. One need only to recall Luther's elaboration of this point and its relation to German abedience to authority as illustrated even in a man like Niemoeller, who still feels that one had to obey the German state as a citizen of the German nation. Yet, in fairness to Luther's position, there is no country in which the church gave more valiant resistance to the Nazis, both politically and theologically, than in Norway.

The elaboration of the relation of the Christian man to the State through John Knox's improvement of Calvin's formulation, to the end that resistance to the state is possible if it violates the true character of statehood, certainly introduces a necessary recourse which the Reformation had denied. The modern elaboration of this view in the theology of Karl Barth (Presbyterians may want to deny the connection with their patron saint, John Knox) poses the problem as the question of whether or not any particular situation threatens the

dissolution of the just state. When it does, resistance is enjoined with absolute sanction.

Although this elaboration of church and state broadens the impression left in certain passages of the Bible and corrects the Reformation view, it nevertheless posits the entire social and political view in terms of the question of the just state. It seems somewhat artificial to ask the question each time one acts as to whether or not we are trying to correct a state so that it is a just state or whether or not it has progressed to the point where it must be opposed.

Although Barth's theology would indicate a sounder basis for ethical decisions, his particular utterances have been couched on the level of the just state and his rejoinder that the war caught him before he could complete his theological work in the realm of ethics hardly alters this fact.

The formulation of the socio-political problem strictly in the category of church and state is but one manifestation of the direction in which the church has moved. On the basis of whatever Biblical statements we have, it certainly follows in logical fashion. But the question is whether or not these can be considered determinative. We already have elaborated the difficulties even from the sociological perspective.

Looking for a different orientation to the problem, many of the sectarian groups, including many of the modern churches, have attempted to deal with the social realm by offering an alternative to the political problem. They are concerned with establishing the ideals of brotherhood and love embodied in the spirit of Jesus as a substitute for the

problem of political reality. Some of them believed that could be done suddenly by violent means, and that once established, it would persist. Marxism is really a secularized version of this sectarian tendency. Most of the sectarian groups, however, including much of the modern church, believe in the possibility of making Christian men who can live together in harmony either on their own accord or at least by a bit of persuasion. Only men would love each other a bit more and would decide to talk things over across the table, much as they do in family life, runs the argument, the political problem would be solved. That we need, they say, is more good will among people and a bit more honesty. Joining the secularists, they desire the solution to life in the application of the Golden Rule.

Coupled with this view there is usually the assumption that by such a way we can keep ourselves out of much of the sin in which the struggle of political realities are involved. It is not by accident then that many of these men belonged to the pacifist groups or that, when they joined the war, they declared a tratorium with the idea that for the duration they would at least not involve themselves. Even such a journal of Christian opinion as the *Christian Century* declared the war a tragic necessity, stating in contrast to many pacifists that we were involved but that we shall not make our decision to fight a Christian decision.

Those who held the general position outlined would attempt to solve the relation of labor and capital by Christian charity and the problem of government by converting men in power to the Christian Gospel. Laudable and neces-

sary as such efforts may be, they hardly strike realistically at the political problem of our time. Without some hard effort toward change in the structure of political life, all the good will in the world will not be of much assistance.

Protestantism must find a way between the artificial but realistic category of stating the problem sheerly as the question of obedience to the state and the idealistic but really irrelevant notion that the problem of our day can be solved by more good will.

Would it not be better to admit quite frankly that no direct light is shed on the political problem in the pages of the Bible than to use the few verses we find for a system or use the ethical teachings as a substitute? There is in reality a very cogent reason for the Bible's silence on this question. It is not so much that it is concerned with salvation to the exclusion of this problem as the fact that the expected end of the world excluded any real consideration of the political problem. Although the Bible never states when history will be brought to an end, it leaves no doubt that the end is expected in its own generation. In the light of the eschatological expectation, the political problem is not too relevant. Perhaps the greatest crisis in the history of the church occurred when the world did not end and the Christians found themselves with the necessity of living in a world which seemingly continued.

Theologically, this issue found its first real elaboration and answer in the exposition of St. Augustine's *Civitates Dei*, in which the relations of the City of God and the City of Man are worked out with great detail. Although the City of God is the eternal fact that tran-

scends and survives the rise and fall of civilizations, the genius of Augustine lies in the way he has tried to elaborate the relation between the two. But if it reflects his genius, it also shows the difficulty. It is not by accident that both Catholicism and Protestantism have been able to draw from Augustine. At the risk of some oversimplification, it is possible to state that Augustine's conception of the church is really the Catholic cornerstone of its outlook upon the political problem. It is precisely this aspect which has been and must be rejected by Protestantism.

St. Augustine saw the dialectical relation between the City of God and the City of Man. He saw what we have tried to elaborate in the opening of this paper, that history is in constant negation of the Kingdom but that significant decisions must be made in the midst of this historic process if the Kingdom of God is to be related to the world of man. At times, Augustine made it too unequivocally. This is the point at which Catholicism has drawn. It sees quite clearly that the logic of the entire gospel must be applied to the historical situation in the midst of all its relativity. But it tends to make every relative position too absolute. Consequently, Catholicism can tell its members exactly what stand they are to take in a particular historical situation. But in so doing, while it makes decision for the rank and file an easy matter, it ignores the sin in every historical circumstance, even when it is on the right side of a political question.

A truly Protestant conception of this problem, I think, is at once more difficult but more in accord with the Biblical tradition. We know the character of our world as an interim in which we

are to be obedient. But we know also that our obedience is always fraught with disobedience. We live, then, in the tension of obedience and disobedience, resolved only by the forgiveness of God and the final advent of His Kingdom. This obedience in the political realm is the problem of justice. Insofar as every historical situation always contains elements of injustice, Protestantism is really always in protest. Insofar as there are possibilities of improvement, Protestantism is always making decision to that end, knowing the transitory character of every decision, knowing that a decision one way today may have to be made another way tomorrow. In short, it knows the continuing character of responsible decision on the basis of a God who demands a continuing concern.

Protestantism knows the ambiguity of its decisions, but it knows also that it cannot escape them. Like Elijah under the juniper tree, knowing that he could not have escaped killing the false prophets but also having repentance and an uneasy conscience, we make our decisions in the relative and sinful alternatives of life. We are obedient to God in war, but we know the character of our sin. Just because we are inexorably involved in human sin, we shall not be released from our responsibility. We can, in short, claim no vantage point of purity in surveying the world and in making decisions in it.

This orientation to the sociological problem indicates that in a very real way the Christian faith has something to say about the sociological structure of the world. On the other hand, we shall insist also upon a knowledge of the socioeconomic-political factors as a necessary

prerequisite for making decisions. While it is necessary to carefully delineate the Christian faith and what it says about the world, it is also necessary to know the particular historical circumstances in the midst of which God demands obedience. It is because of the dynamic character of our faith, in which obedience is always contingent upon our continuing responsibility, that Protestantism can at once be so real but yet so difficult.

Let us see how such a concept of obedience and responsible decision applies to the world in which we shall live. Although we are not specialists in the political or economic sphere, there are some very significant problems that we shall have to face. Already the handwriting is on the wall. One of the first promises at the end of the fighting was the release of control on business, so that our free enterprise could continue as the answer to our economic questions. Yet, the sobering fact is that unemployment already looms as an actual fact, only to be accentuated in a few years by the simple law of supply and demand. When industry at its best cannot employ all the people who can work, it certainly cannot do so when the market for the supply of goods is saturated. The vicious circle is then deepened by the fact that the purchasing power needed to consume what is known economically as over-production is lessened when many are unemployed because of over-production. The only hope for such an economy's continuing its possibility of expansion in foreign markets and capital. Foreign markets have fast disappeared, and capital reinvested only enters into competition on the exact spot where we desired markets.

We live, you see, in an age in which free enterprise in the strict laissez faire sense is fast disappearing. Even Wall Street, symbolized by Eric Johnson of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, sees this problem with a clearness denied many in the church. But seeing that some type of socialization of some of the industries is necessary and will come, his advice to big business interests is to see to it that they get in the seat of authority whenever and wherever it happens.

Knowing this situation, we shall not, however, join with those Christians and secularists who conceive of Socialism as the answer to this problem. We may have to support some such movement as a type of economic answer to our dilemma. But we shall also know its difficulties and the possible encroachment upon liberty. Russia may have made great strides in the economic realm, but it did so at the expense of freedom. The problem of our time is the need for greater regulation to make our economy work, but not at the expense of destroying our freedom and initiative. There are, indeed, politicians and economists pioneering in that direction. The Church, in this situation, cannot give a blue print. We see the necessity of change, but we know that no change offers a perfect solution. But we shall be faced with the necessity of making concrete decisions in this area. We may side with certain groups because we feel they are moving in the right direction, but we shall know that they are not a panacea.

Let us be quite concrete. The struggle between labor and capital will be acute. We know that labor is not pure or unselfish in its demands. We know

also that there are labor racketeers and clashes between labor unions. Nevertheless, it can and must be said that in the general direction in which we have been moving, justice has lain predominately on the side of labor. It is not enough to point out the sins on both sides, necessary as it is. We shall have to reach decisions, and the very absence of trying to make a decision is a decision in itself.

We shall have the same type of situation on the international level. We may not like the new possibilities of world order, because they are really a coalition of the major powers, whose motives are not always pure. On the other hand, some may think that with this coalition will come a day when nations can live together without tensions. But nations do not easily give up their sovereignty and usually do so only when there is no other choice. The very charter of the United Nations leaves the sovereignty of the major powers intact. Tensions will continue, but the question will be how we can deal with them.

There is one inescapable conclusion—the continuation of problems with which

we need to deal creatively but in terms of political reality. There is a temptation to become weary of this continual responsibility, but that very disobedience is the essence of sin. We do not wish to be responsible, but God leaves us no other choice.

Such, in brief compass, are the dimensions from which I feel the church must face the world. The problems are much deeper than sheerly a matter of good will, because it is the will of man which causes trouble. The matter is more difficult than a sheer analysis of church and state, because more complex factors are involved. It is more difficult than Catholicism, because every decision dare not be as absolute as Catholicism assumes. Protestantism is a continuing faith and obedience, in which there is no cynicism because the world has been overcome; no sheer idealism, because sin is recognized. In the midst of this ongoing character of life is a faith which transcends all these struggles, but which does not draw us out of them. On the basis of the forgiveness of God, we shall work out our salvation with fear and trembling.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES OF THE FELLOWSHIP OF SOCIALIST CHRISTIANS*

I.

The Fellowship of Socialist Christians accepts the Christian faith as the only adequate interpretation and guide for human existence. It seeks to interpret the meaning of that faith for man's social responsibilities and decisions and to make its resources more fully available for the creation of a just social order.

The Fellowship believes that the Kingdom of God or God's sovereignty over history is objectively always a fact; that Christians are bound to understand and accept God's sovereignty in faith and by worship and that such acknowledgment and obedience opens human society to the transformations which are possible when men seek to place human desires and loyalties under the judgment and the guidance of God. We acknowledge that modern secular efforts for justice, both liberal and Marxist, contain an implicit acknowledgment of a universal law which transcends human interests; but these secular movements have distorted the prophetic conception of God's sovereignty and therefore perennially confuse the struggle for justice by falsely hoping for, or claiming achievement of, a perfect justice

through the historical process. Protestantism on the other hand usually gives a too individualistic interpretation of God's rule over us and fails to understand that it includes all human, social and material realities. Against secular versions of the prophetic content of our faith we must declare that God's reign always encounters opposition in history. This opposition may be overcome and bound but never completely annihilated. The consummation of God's reign therefore lies beyond history yet includes history. We must emphasize the Kingdom's transcendent character in opposition to secularism and its relevance to history in opposition to individualistic and pietistic versions of Christianity. In opposition to Catholicism it must be emphasized that the church itself stands under God's judgment.

The final ethical norm for all decisions is the perfect love of God as revealed in Christ. This norm places all forms of individual and collective self-seeking, racial, economic and national under judgment. Yet the fact of sin requires that men seek a tolerable justice in the human community, which means that they must place a check upon human self-seeking by government and other instruments of coercion and resistance to injustice. These structures of justice represent efforts to approximate brotherhood in the human community and insofar as they do they are instru-

*This Statement of Principles takes the place of the provisional Statement prepared by Professor A. J. A. M. and published in CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIETY in the Spring of 1944. The Statement has been altered in various ways in three different sessions of the Fellowship. While it is not yet necessarily in final form it represents the Principles of the Fellowship essentially.

ments of the divine. But they are all operated by human agents and therefore subject to sinful distortion. Every instrument of justice may in a given historic situation become a vehicle of injustice rather than justice. All instruments of order and justice therefore stand under divine judgment.

The providential reign of God affirms, transforms or destroys all human achievements, including the social and political institutions by which men seek to achieve a tolerable corporate existence. A particular period of history is always experiencing this threefold relationship to God but any one or two of the divine activities may predominate.

The judgment of God upon our social institutions reveals itself in history even without faith. Its evidence is in the increasing confusion and injustice which results from institutions, structures and arrangements of property and government which were originally intended to preserve justice and establish community. The repentance and obedience of faith must however prompt men to accept these judgments, to cease from identifying their interests and privileges in society with the divine will or their form of power and justice with the divine order. In this way contrite faith may be used by God in history to prevent social orders from being doomed by the crystallization of their structures and arrangements.

Our faith leads us to try to discern the purposes of God in our period of history and to try to affirm them insofar as we think we understand them. Recognizing the fallibility of human judgments we do not identify our religiously inspired political and social convictions with our Christian faith. We belong to

an inclusive church which has within its fellowship persons of varying political and economic convictions. The church is held together by a common faith and not by common political convictions.

We do however regard our political and social convictions as extremely important since they represent for us necessary implementations of ethical judgments derived from our faith. We believe it important for Christians, inside the church, to band together upon the basis of common political convictions and to seek to persuade the church that there is a clearer judgment of God upon the present institutions of property and government than the church has thus far apprehended.

II

The present economic system has played a major role in producing the situation from which comes the present war and the internal troubles of the nations. Modern capitalism, by which we mean the economic system of the western nations, has shown itself unable to maintain general employment, to distribute the products of its mass production and to use the resources of physical nature and the creativity of man for general human welfare. It is the Christian understanding of the will of God that the fruits of nature and of human creative production be used for the satisfaction of human needs and the development of human culture. Human disobedience has expressed itself in an economic system which subordinates these things to the payment of dividends on invested capital. Profit, in the sense of money gained by the investment of money, is the god served first. Economic incentives are universal and must

be given their limited place in any system, but when they determine major economic decisions and goals, distortion and breakdown result. This distortion and this breakdown bring misery and spiritual disintegration to multitudes of persons.

Further, capitalist economy, by its inward logic, has become monopolistic. Great centers of wealth are themselves in slavery to the principle inherent in them: that money must make money, a principle upon which no other human civilization has founded its economic life. The great monopolies are absolutely responsible to the necessity of earning dividends and in the last analysis irresponsible to the will of God, human need, cultural development, world justice and peace, and even national military and naval defense.

Our age has seen the beginning of the senile stage of modern capitalism. When the system is not sustained by State expenditures for social services or armaments, it gives rise to great capital surpluses which cannot find investment, increasing unemployment, under-consumption commonly called over-production, mass poverty, and a strong tendency toward international war for raw materials and exclusively controlled export markets.

The necessity for maintaining human existence is everywhere destroying the present form of our economy. Economic power, for good or ill, is being forced by political pressures to serve other ends than its own enhancement. This inevitable transformation of our economic system creates both progressive and retrogressive possibilities and casts the problem of our future into the sphere of politics.

Since the State alone is potentially strong enough to force responsibility for general human welfare upon the monopolies of economic power, our destiny is largely to be determined by the struggle for the State which is taking place, or has taken place, in every industrial nation. In this struggle, the Fellowship believes that democracy will survive only if it is able to embody its principles in the economic organization of man's life. Democracy, as a political system and a social reality must control the economic system in terms of general planning or the economic system will destroy democracy through its political power. In the sense of being committed to a democratically controlled economic system we are socialists without the acceptance of doctrinaire blue prints for the future which are so often associated with the word.

Our understanding of socialism has undergone a progressive modification due to a changing and deepening of our theological convictions, a gradual assimilation of European experience through our emigre members, a close observation of the Soviet development and our experience with the American Communist Party. For all of us the word socialism indicates a general direction of democratic transformation of our economic, political and social life; each step must be taken in the light of the effort to maintain democratic controls of the State, to avert bureaucracy to the greatest possible degree and to preserve as much freedom and automatism in the production and marketing of goods as is compatible with the necessary social controls. We believe that the most strategic centers of economic power should be socialized. In order to prevent too great concentration of power the inter-

vention of the State should, as far as possible, take the form of the creation of autonomous public agencies such as the T.V.A. Also both producers' and consumers' cooperation should be encouraged as an important form of economic organization.

We are deeply aware that economic collectivism may be achieved at the price of losing democracy in the social and political spheres. Western democracies must create within themselves States powerful enough to curb the tyranny of economic monopolies without creating tyrannical States. Political Fascism may come as the way of achieving collectivism or as an alternative to democratic socialism. Both as Christians and as analysts of our times we see in democracy values that are not bound to its historical bourgeois form. Those values are often overlooked by the Marxist critics of democracy.

For similar reasons we do not believe that the forms of industrial organization should indiscriminately be employed in agriculture as well. Inasmuch as the agrarian crisis is due to the fact that American agriculture had lost—before the war—its export markets for cotton, tobacco, and other staple crops, no system of the world, whether small-scale or large-scale, could avoid the necessity of cutting down the acreage. But the agrarian crisis too often denotes, not that small farming is untenable and must be replaced by large farms of capitalist structure, as orthodox Marxians would have it, but simply that small farms lack the necessary schooling and training and, hence, do not compete on a footing of equal opportunity. The experiences with the schooling of small farmers in Northwestern Europe have made this

clear beyond dispute. There is no reason to expect that, in case of equal training, the same size and organization would be optimal for such different branches of agriculture as cotton, corn and other raw products, on the one hand, and the care of individual cattle and plants on the other hand; a natural differentiation seems indicated. In addition, electrification makes available to small farms many advantages of large-scale farming. And other such advantages become accessible to small farms through the co-operative technique so brilliantly developed by those same European countries in the fields of marketing, purchase of seed and fodder, operation and use in terms of machines, organization of credit, etc. Cooperative individualism is a real alternative to collectivism, and it is an indispensable form of life in a multiform economic democracy.

In the struggle for a democratic state and society, we believe that organized labor plays a special role which is its vocation under God. This, of course, means only that the vocation of other groups must be informed by this understanding of organized labor. In America the great middle class will determine the issue either by an active alliance with labor which will not prohibit a critical attitude, or by inertia and final acquiescence in domination of the state by reactionaries. The special vocation of organized labor means that it is the only potentially powerful organized body whose enlightened self-interest coincides roughly with the best interests of the majority of men. Labor has a righteousness not its own which calls us to its support. Labor is more likely than other groups to be on the side of justice though as it gains privilege it is just as

kely as other privileged groups to succumb to temptation. In America, labor's divisions into several inimical camps, its general lack of responsibility for racial and unemployed minorities, its frequent failure to achieve democracy within labor organizations, and its lack of political unity, coherence and articulation, may make it unable to fulfill its vocation. (We remember here that the churches share in these sins.) Support of Labor does not make us uncritical of it, and criticism does not make us unsympathetic.

The Fellowship believes that the process of change may involve conflict and destruction. We do not believe that good-will alone is a guarantee against the possibility of violent conflict. We

do believe that the most certain way of mitigating conflict and violence is to enlist the largest number of the total community in the struggle for a new order. On the basis of our Christian doctrine, we recognize the inevitability of the conflict of interests in society as one of the forms in which human sin will always express itself. But we believe that both the necessities of a technical civilization and the claims of justice reinforce each other and make it possible to win the cooperation or at least the consent of many whose interests seem to be opposed to change. In America there are great resources both in our Christian heritage and in our democratic creed which are on the side of the goals which we seek.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Emlyn Davies, who contributes the article on political thought in Wales, is Professor of Church History in South Wales Baptist College, Cardiff. He was until 1944 the Welch Secretary of the Christian Student Movement.

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lished by the Macmillan Company, and entitled "The Faith of a Protestant".

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE CHRISTIAN ANSWER, by Paul J. Tillich, Theodore M. Greene, George F. Thomas, Edwin E. Aubrey and John Knox, edited and with an introduction by Henry P. Van Dusen. Scribner's. \$2.50.

That the world situation of every age asks a profound question as to the meaning of human existence is the presupposition of all theological study. The only rationale that any theology can claim for itself is that it either answers or points to the answer of this question in such a way that an adequate orientation is given to human experience. With rather different emphases at almost every point in content, the five authors and the editor of "The Christian Answer" are in agreement on the point that Christianity must speak a relevant word to the modern world.

The name, *The Christian Answer*, is, however, misleading. This book is actually an excellent statement of the question together with indications of the line which the answer must take, by Prof. Tillich, with the other four authors failing to meet the challenge of their common purpose in writing the book. The failure is not simply that the outlook of many modern Christian traditions is poles removed from the theological insights of Socialist Christians. It is that the rest of the book, with some possible exceptions in Prof. Knox's article, fails to come to grips with the question Tillich asks.

The difficulties of symposia are well known. Even when men share a common point of view, it is difficult to make

a joint production present the evenness and balance of a considered and consistent position. When the authors of a symposium actually are one largely because of their age while otherwise representing different schools of thought, the problem is accentuated. The main problem of "The Christian Answer" is not, however, the combining of five different essays from five different men into one volume. Dr. Van Dusen has done his job ably on that level. The problem is that after recognizing the profundity of the modern crisis, which recognition is assumed by their common endorsement of Tillich's essay, they proceed to bat it around without facing up to it.

The book starts off with a strong and critical analysis of the modern world, which is a fair representation of Tillich's theology compressed into small compass. The essay sketches the religious problem of the present day against the background of the evolution of a bourgeois-rationalist culture through three successive phases in which the role of reason is progressively abstracted from a vital connection with the basic issues of existence. While some may object that Tillich leaves reason hanging in the air, dethroned as the dynamic of modern culture, but not fitted into any solutions, such an issue should actually have been dealt with in the other essays. Tillich is presenting the problem.

The author of the first essay illustrates his thesis by a summary review of the evolution of art, education, economics and politics during the past four hun-

dred years, and finally analyzed the reasons for the irrelevance of the Christian Church in the modern world. The religious meaning of both personality and community has been destroyed by the emergence of autonomous personalities and communities, which destroyed the transcendent center of the former and dried up the spiritual center of the latter. "The absence of a Christian theology able to express an ultimate reality and spiritual center in terms of religious belief has produced scepticism and cynicism regarding all questions of ultimate concern.

Tillich concludes with five guideposts for the Christian answer which the other four authors almost entirely evade. The five guideposts are an excellent summary statement of the relation of creative religion to the problem of existence. From then on the book suffers from the fact that while the authors of the essays are familiar with the philosophies of non-Christian schools of thought, and with the pressure of modern secularism, they neither see what they are attacking nor what they are defending against the background of the problem of existence. Instead we have, with the exception of Knox, rather reasoned essays in which the arguments of Christianity are externalized and compared to parallel claims.

Dr. Greene uses a slightly streamlined version of traditional scholasticism in order to dispose of the validity of both naturalism and humanism, which he does with too great facility to be convincing. He then states the traditional elements of the Christian tradition with as much vitality as one would present the inventory of a warehouse full of iron castings. We are given in cold, logical

outline, one after another, the Christian concepts of the supernatural, revelation, reason, faith, dogma and the church.

Dr. Thomas wrestles with pretty much the same problem from the point of view of a mildly liberal Protestantism. He gives an excellent condensed version of the traditional seminary explanations of the meaning of revelation, the Bible, God, Creation, man and sin, Christ, the Atonement, salvation by faith, the kingdom of God, etc. It is the same Christian answer which theological professors have been propounding for centuries, clearly written and in brief compass. This reviewer would recommend Thomas's article for anyone preparing for ordination examinations, but as a statement of the Christian answer to the desperate situation of the modern world it is largely familiar words.

Dr. Aubrey has the task of relating Christianity to the modern social scene. He is aware that a vital religion must speak to basic human needs, such as security, unity, freedom and personal meaningfulness, and that its statement must be realistic—in the sense of facing facts, and dynamic—subject to change. Beneath these recognitions, however, is presented a plea for the love-ethic of the traditional Social Gospel, supplemented somewhat by a recognition of the contributions of the social sciences to an understanding of human problems. There is no recognition of the tragedy of the human situation nor of the continual question which society, as such, always asks autonomous man.

The final essay, that of Dr. Knox, has a profound grasp of religious dimensions in one direction—that of the depths of the individual's personality—but it ap-

pears to suffer from a lack of perspective in the opposite direction, that of the context in which the human life is lived. For a modern and profound statement of the rationale of personal religion, this is as good an example in brief compass as this reviewer has read—both demonstrating the religious needs of the single personality and raising the existential problem which the term, personal religion, raises. Dr. Knox seems to be discovering an understanding of the Christian community at the end of his essay, but he lacks the perspective of realizing that the alternative, instead of being no community at all, is divided community.

When summed up, *The Christian Answer* is a valuable depiction of the contradictions within modern American Protestantism, which underline the urgency of the question Tillich phrased.

CHARLES D. KEAN

THE COMING GREAT CHURCH,
by Theodore O. Wedel. Macmillan.
\$2.00.

The significance of the Church as one part of the dialectical social context in which Christians live within history has received a fresh emphasis in recent years. Many theologians have discovered new meaning for the Church as that setting of fellowship standing in contradiction to the divided community of the unredeemed world. Canon Theodore O. Wedel is a writer who has appreciated something of the existential meaning of the Church.

Dr. Wedel is an Anglican, and as such he is a member of a communion (like the reviewer) which has always valued

the concept of the Christian Church as a major point in its theology. Indeed, Anglicans have tended to claim a monopoly, if not on membership at least on comprehension of the meaning, of the Church. But Dr. Wedel has rediscovered the Church against a more profound background.

Dr. Wedel's book, based upon his Bohlen lectures at the Philadelphia Divinity School (Episcopal), is an interesting discussion of the significance of the Church, qua Christian fellowship, as the necessary center for Christian reunion and for making the Christian faith a vital force in the modern world. The author, however, never quite decided whether he is re-stating the theology of the Church for the modern world or whether he is carrying on a debate against other Anglicans with different views. The book fluctuates between being a statement of a crucial religious issue and an internal denominational discussion.

Nevertheless, Dr. Wedel has sensed the relevance of his subject matter for something more vital than a mere discussion of the role of Anglicanism. His first two chapters, "The Coming Great Church" and "The Church of Christian Faith", are a valuable exposition of the function of the Christian fellowship in relation to: (1) proclaiming the Gospel for all men everywhere, and (2) as the earnest of the Kingdom within history. The author makes an excellent refutation of the popular Roman and Anglican description of the Church as "the extension of the Incarnation". Instead he sees it as holy and sinful at one and the same time, in contrast to the world, yet involved in the world. It is "the fellow-

ship of the spirit itself, living under the judgment of Christ".

The other two chapters in this little book, "The Catholic Protestant Chasm" and "The Problem of Church Order" are largely Anglican in treatment although having wider relevance. Their great value is to show those of other traditions that Dr. Wedel and Anglicans like him, have not only a theory of the Church in general but also a view of such practical aspects as the sacraments and ministry, understood functionally, with which Evangelical Protestants can come to terms. The author is primarily engaged in showing his fellow-Anglicans that while he will allow no one to gain-say his appreciation of the "catholic heritage", nevertheless traditional Anglican concepts must be rethought against a more realistic background if they are to be relevant to the need of the modern world for a vital fellowship of faith.

C. D. K.

THE YOGI AND THE COMMISSAR,
by Arthur Koestler. Macmillan. 1945.
\$2.50.

Koestler is one of those versatile giants who stands above mere human categorization. When you liken him to Dickens or Steinbeck as a reformist novelist he comes through with a work which defies such a categorization. When it appears that he is a Dostoyevski in his appreciation of the abyss into which man falls, or has fallen, then he contributes an essay which puts him on another level. When it appears that he is a seriously literary Salvador Dali, he defies that analysis of his contribution. He has so many sides: outstandingly acute psychologist, capable novelist of the first

order, political analyst, religious commentator. This latest book shows him somehow in all of his roles.

The Yogi and the Commissar is a collection of essays which appeared previously in *Horizon*, *Tribune*, *The Evening Standard*, and *The New York Times*. They are collected, edited, added to in the production of this very serious book of analysis of trends in our times. The title is quite obvious: he is making an attempt to show the sorry impasse of a civilization which has fallen for the extremes of foolish mysticism or the ultra-activistic commissar mentality. Both lead only to destruction as he points out (p. 12), "If Commissar-journalism of the Communist pamphlet type is bad, Yogi-journalism of the Gerald Heard type is worse. Both discredit the idea they stand for. . . ."

The attitude which is displayed in the essays on the Decline and Fall of Orthodox Marxism (these include such essay titles as "Anatomy of a Myth", "Soviet Myth and Reality", "The End of an Illusion") is one of happy balance. He clearly points out that he is seriously disappointed that the first organized attempt to establish socialism has turned out so badly. With no equivocation he gives data to show that the aberrations in Russia, fundamental aberrations at that, are not due merely to "encirclement of capitalist nations", or "pressure of war emergency", but are merely due to bad men working in a situation which many believed incapable of producing bad men. The movement to a state capitalistic pseudo-rightist fascism certainly did not fit the theory of a dictatorship of the proletariat, or the withering away of the state.

Yet it is heartening to know that here is one disillusioned idealist who has not been given over to cynicism or nihilism, or capitalism! Although he recognizes certain fundamental failure of communism in Russia, he still believes in a possible synthesis higher than either the Yogi or the Commissar. And he points out the seriousness of the spiritual issues involved. On page 125 he points out that "progress had recovered its lost religion: Soviet Russia became the new 'Opium of the People' ". Again, later, he writes (p. 192): "The Russian Revolution has failed in its aim to create a new type of human society in a new moral climate. The ultimate reason for its failure was the *arid nineteenth century materialism* of its doctrine. It had to fall back on the old opiates because it did not recognize man's need for spiritual nourishment."

Yet this book is surely no confession of Christian faith. As a matter of fact, he gives a quite clever little remark about C. S. Lewis, a justified crack! "Thus to imply that the only alternative to mechanism is the Church of England, and that the only approach to what we can't touch and see is through Christian Dogma, is indeed disarmingly naive coming from a Fellow of Magdalen College in 1944."

In the midst of all the pro- and contra-Soviet Russia books which are falling off the presses, this one should be the most welcome. Its fairness can hardly be questioned; its insights are profound; the data are disturbing but needed; the religious motif will be welcomed by students of politics who are also Christian, or even religious.

ADOLPH BEHRENBURG

THE LIBERAL TRADITION, by William Orton. Yale University Press. \$3.00.

FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY IN THE AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE, by Carl L. Becker. Alfred Knopf. \$2.50.

The late Carl Becker was one of the wisest guides and interpreters of American democracy. In this posthumously published volume he summarizes his democratic creed most eloquently. Becker was always conscious of the inadequacy of the eighteenth century thought, which lies at the basis of so much of our liberalism. In this volume he is particularly anxious to prove that a theory of rights, without emphasis upon the responsibilities which correspond to the rights, leads to social anarchy. The book is therefore an illuminating discussion of the relation of morals to politics. But Becker is never a pure moralist. He does not believe that any system of democracy will work if only moral men with a high sense of responsibility operate its mechanisms. He wants the structures, mechanism and procedures changed in the light of new economic and technical developments. He is as critical of undue devotion to written constitutions and sanctified traditions as of undue emphasis upon rights. His discussion of the problems of our day is therefore in every respect wise and illuminating.

Professor Orton is also critical of our liberal tradition. He does not believe that devotion to liberty can be justified merely by confidence that unmanaged economic process will work out for the good of the community. He wants to go back to an older liberal tradition

which regarded liberty as the final end of society, no matter what the consequences. Despite some very able analyses of the currents of democratic thought in recent centuries, the book ends upon a libertarian note which is hardly adequate for the perplexities of our day.

R. N.

WORLD ORDER, by *F. Ernest Johnson*, Editor. Harper Brothers. \$2.00.

CIVILIZATION AND GROUP RELATIONS, edited by *R. M. MacIver*. Harper Brothers. \$2.00.

Both of these volumes represent the proceedings of the Conference on Science, Religion and Philosophy which is held annually and which annually yields these volumes. There is some excellent material in the volumes, though I must confess that as I read them year by year I have the feeling that I have heard all this before. There seems to be little progression in the discussion.

The issue is always the same. There is no fault in that because the conference rightly deals with one of the basic problems of our age. That problem is how to establish a decent measure of harmony in both a pluralistic national community and in a world community with varying cultural and ethnic vitalities. One might raise the question whether the Conference on Science, Religion and Philosophy could not get away from this perennial issue and seek to illumine some of the other profound problems of our culture: the question for instance whether a scientific culture is adequate for the solution of the spiritual problems of our age. The Conference seems determined to assume the identity of the interest of science, religion and phi-

losophy in establishing a decent harmony of cultures in the nation and the world. It is thereby prevented from analysing the differences between various scientific, philosophical and religious approaches.

One contradiction which emerges again and again in these discussions is that between the proponents of some moral universalism and even cultural universalism and those who seek harmony in the national and international community by a frank acceptance of its pluralism in religion and culture.

The Catholic authors in these annual volumes, for instance, continue to insist that world order depends upon the general acceptance by all of the nations of "the moral law". But what are we to do if nations interpret the moral law differently or even in contradictory terms? Both Russia and the west for instance profess themselves devoted to "democracy". The Russians believe that they are democratic in the Balkan countries because they are liquidating landlordism. But we do not regard them as democratic because they refuse to hold "free elections". Here the same word "democracy" scarcely obscures a deep cleavage in ideology between Russia and the west.

Furthermore the Catholic authors never really face the problem which British Catholics under the late Cardinal Hinsley did finally face. That is whether they are ready to cooperate on civic and international programs upon the basis of a common devotion to "natural law" with other religious groups who differ with them in every respect, except their common devotion to generally valid concepts of justice. They might even differ with them on how

detailed such a "natural law" can be stated. It may be that men of good-will can agree upon certain general principles of justice without being able to agree upon any detailed applications of the principles. If Catholics for instance should insist that the prohibition of birth-control belongs to the natural law we could not go along with them, any more than we could go along with libertarians who regard *laissez faire* economics as a requirement of the natural law.

Dr. F. Ernst Johnson, the author of one of the volumes, wrestles with the problem of pluralism and unity more significantly than any of the other authors. He declares that all this talk about cultural pluralism is well enough but that we shall nullify what is legitimate in it "if we overlook the necessity of an overarching cultural unity". "World order", he declares, "if it is anything finer or more durable than the achievement of police power presupposes a world culture". This represents rather inexact thought. There must be some minimal world community if world order is not to rest purely upon police power. But community can not be identified with culture. Modern democratic nations have proved the pos-

sibility of maintaining community despite a wide variety of cultural and religious forces. It was in fact the achievement of Madison, Jefferson and our own proponents of religious liberty to prove that communal harmony could be maintained in a diversity of cultures whereas it was the thesis of the medieval-feudal world that cultural and religious diversity would destroy the harmony and peace of the community.

If world community is to wait upon the achievement of world culture the prospects are dark indeed. Dr. Johnson is afraid of the pessimism of some recent theology and makes an appeal "for fundamental social optimism". But his own position is a deeply pessimistic one. He bases world community upon the unattainable goal of the unity of world culture. Incidentally we ought to have learned by now that our hopes and our fears are less relevant to the problems of the world community than our duties. How can we say in an age of the atomic bomb just how much pessimism or optimism is justified by the historic situation? We can not be clear about that; but we can be clear about what our duty is. Our duty is to create a tolerable community in global terms.

R. N.